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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

FROM : Hal Ford

SUBJECT: Additional Thoughts for the 1990s' Section IV

Events of the last week point up the necessity of bringing increased future US intelligence focus -- collection, collation, analysis, policy relevance -- to two additional areas of interest: Soviet-surrogate relations, and terrorist activities in the Middle East and Latin America.

1. Soviet-surrogate relations

a. For many years US policy missed some good bets by looking on the so-called Soviet bloc as a monolith. In more recent years the US has recognized and profited from Sino-Soviet differences, and US intelligence is now beginning to investigate whether there may not be certain Soviet-Eastern European frictions that the US and the West can profitably exploit.

b. Not so, as yet, Soviet-surrogate differences: many observers (governmental and public) tend to treat Cuba and the rest as mere puppets or allies of the USSR, and assume that similar sets of relationships exist throughout. US policy hence is once again missing profitable exploitable opportunities. The best recent example of differences is USSR-Cuba re Grenada. Also, we know that there has been at least some out of sync in the last year or so re the Sovs and Libya, Angola, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and South Yemen, and that (including Cuba) these examples involve different degrees of frictions, areas of maneuver, etc. Numerous additional differences of national interest, comparative emphasis, and the like almost certainly exist between the Soviets and these and other clients, of which we are unaware; and certain of these frictions may increase as the USSR's own economic difficulties grow.

c. Added intelligence effort might on occasion greatly aid the sophistication and impact of future US initiatives (overt and covert).

2. Terrorism in the Third World settings

a. Our knowledge of terrorist groups and the effectiveness of counter-terrorist (C-T) efforts are far better re Western Europe than re the Third World. Many W.E. govts have substantial C-T programs, these

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govts are anti-terrorist, and we are in close intel and operational contact with these govts; whereas in the Third World much weaker government C-T programs exist, certain of those govt's themselves sponsor or condone terrorist activity, our C-T liaison relationships are far less, the intel targets are even more difficult than in W.E., and certain of the Third World govts tend to be relatively unconcerned except where terrorism injures their interests.

b. The massive Beirut bombings (Embassy, Marines - French, and probably more to come) illustrate the manner in which quite small groups can greatly complicate, pour fuel on, spoil, or have very high impact on certain situations. And we can safely estimate that various sponsors will take increasing advantage of such terrorist capabilities.

c. Granted such intelligence targets are very difficult ones, the US nonetheless must do much better collection and analysis re terrorist activities in the Middle East and Latin America if we are not to suffer more terrorist disasters. This will obtain in particular as additional small groups and their sponsors recognize the influence to be gained from high impact atrocities, and as the Cubans sponsor heightened anti-US terrorism in Latin America in retaliation for Grenada.

3. I'll be interested in learning whether I get any takers re the above propositions, whether or not any additional language should be appended to Section IV.

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